2:Lowie E-4 (no date) 1946 SP8 Bororo SP8

CULTURE

SUBSISTENCE ACTIVITIES

241 114 Whether the tribe farmed prior to white influence is not clear. Von den Steinen (1894) insists that they did not; cultivation, he emphasizes, occurred only along the headwaters of the São Lourenço River, and even there was confined to tobacco, cotton, and gourds used as containers, i. e., to species not serving for food. In a western aldea the growing of manioc and maize noted by Kozlowsky (1895 b) seems to have been incipient, since he considered the amount insufficient for a fortnight's sustenance. Colbacchini (1925) denies agriculture but records a myth explaining the origin of maize; and of Baldus' (1936) informants some strongly affirmed and others disputed [178] the cultivation of maize (milho) in earlier times. On the Vermelho River, manioc and maize are planted nowadays, in addition to rice, which is, of course, very recent. 224

At all events, it seems safe to conclude that the *Bororo* were predominantly [222] hunters, gatherers, and fishermen. Typically, a husband would go hunting game in the woods while his wife collected seeds, climbed palms for nuts, and dug up roots with a stick. Women also helped [462] returning hunters by carrying their kill home. Game animals included peccaries (the favorite food), tapirs, jaguars, rabbits, and [756] various birds. Communal hunting expeditions, possibly extending over several weeks, were inspired by medicine men, who indicated [231] the sites for major enterprises. Dogs were originally quite unknown. 226

Fish are caught in nets or weirs, shot with arrows (pl. 86, *bottom*), or drugged. Some are killed with short clubs suspended on the back from a neck-cord. Barbed harpoons are hurled at large fish and caimans.

252 262 **Food preparation.**—Salt was originally unknown.

All game animals are roasted in their skins; only the intestines are [263] boiled. Meat, bones, and nuts are sometimes pounded in a mortar only 16 inches (40 cm.) in height; it has the shape of a decapitated egg, and is planted in the ground. The nuts, either thus pounded or [574] roasted, are mixed with water and stirred into a gruel, which is served to guests.

HOUSES AND VILLAGES

361 In the dry season the *Eastern Bororo* settlements are near the river banks, whence they are shifted to higher ground when the rains set in. Even in temporary encampments the center is occupied by a large [342 345] rectangular house—the men's club, workshop, and ceremonial hall, which likewise serves as the bachelor's dormitory. The family houses, on the other hand, are arranged along the circumference of [184] the circle of which this men's house is the center. Only the *Cabaçaes*

its ceremonial obligations. It is felt that each clan should have its own house, but if the number of people in the clan is too large, additional houses can be built.

Preferential marriage between particular lineages is supported by myths. Marriages are all contracted between the two moieties except for two cases within the Echerae moiety. Otherwise marriages within the same moiety are frowned on. Marriage does not establish an alliance between two groups. Rather, marriage is the result of an alliance which was established by other means in the mythical past.

All important events in a person's life, such as naming, initiation, and death, are marked by songs and ceremonies. The ceremonies on the occasion of death are particularly long and elaborare. Traditional songs, each of which belongs to a particular clan, are in a poetic language not understood by many contemporary Bororo.

Today the old ways of life are disappearing. Hunting and gathering have become fruitless in a changed and impoverished environment and have been almost completely given up. Many ceremonies are not held anymore. For lack of material, ornaments are not made according to the old standards. The colorful birds, the jaguars, and the other animals of the forest are gone. Yet the Bororo remain a proud people. They are proud of their heritage and often point out that all over western Mato Grosso potsherds and annatto plants planted by their ancestors attest the extent of their territory and the number of villages that existed in the past. They compare

772 Commentary:

1. Village vs. jungle; central vs. peripheral; civil vs. wild; day vs. night.

772 361 82 [101] [562] [775] The Bororo call themselves boe. The term bororo refers not to the people but to the ceremonial plaza situated west of the men's house. It also refers to the center of the village and, by extension, to the village itself. A place cleared of trees and brush, in contrast to its surroundings, the plaza is the setting of the most important ceremonies and the domain of men and Aroe--the spirits or souls--which the men themselves become when performing ceremonies. It [72] [222] [229] is a social, not a wild, place. Outside of the village is the domain of the animals and Bope. Secular activities such as hunting and gathering are performed there; and big trees with their dark shadows are the favorite places of Bope. Darkness and night are Bope's time. During the night the [551] Bororo do not like to wander outside their village. And even in the village people should not be called by name during the night. Aroe are not bound to any particular time

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[773] [539] Badajebage rema. Mare erudu iwa kare ji. Du etobeadure baeku paga t jewu rakuduye. Du kaere ichare nabure aregodure. Ure tayado, tayado, tayado etaoji: 'Arara, arara, arara,' akore, nabure akore tui tayadodu tabo, etaoji du tabo. Tuburedugodui jetu moto kae, etae, du tabore ichare akore: 'Echera, echera,' ino tugoduji. Ichare ekurure kuri pa bukeje. Akore: 'Echera borororeo.' Du pijire ichare [illegible]. Du tabore ichare Badajebage egore: 'Ai, Echera bororo u radewo. Aregodure kodire ichare ure paviye oino iyeji. Pagirema paedu pagare u mode tu bukeje, paerudu iwa bokwa tabo. Kodi karega ichare ure paviye oino iyeji."

/139 cont./

121 One cannot say, generalizing, that the sex that does the heavier and economically more valuable work has a position superior or inferior to the other one. Also, many times, it is not possible to decide which is the heavier 462 or economically more valuable work. Thus, Karl von den • 222 Steinen (o.c., p. 490) says of the Bororo that among them, "in spite of all the hunting, the vegetable food sought by the women has greater importance because it is obtained with more regularity and in abundance. The women look for roots by means of a sharpened stick, climb with great agility the palm trees among which the oaussú and the acurí have preference, collect the nuts, cut out in the top the 'palm cabbage,' look for fruits of the jatobá /locust tree/ and of the piquí, /Caryocar brasiliense/, etc."

462 The men's typical tasks are, among the Indians, [224] hunting, cutting and carving wood, and the building of the house. Yet there are exceptions with regard to these tasks too: in some tribes the woman accompanies the man in hunting, even, in certain cases, shooting with the bow; in other tribes, for example among the Bororo, she cuts certain trees in order to obtain palm nuts and honey; in 462 many she also helps in the construction of the house. But, 141 considering this general division of labor, we might, perhaps, be led to suppose, at first sight, that the woman would want to get rid of the heavier tasks, since, among /140/ most of the Indians, she is on the average smaller (3)

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3. In contrast let there be indicated the following tribes described by Barbosa Rodrigues (v. E. Roquette-Pinto, Rondonia, 3rd. ed., São Paulo, 1935, p. 196): "Tembés -- Male stature, in general, shorter than the female. Women tall and thin; men short and fat. Mundurucús -- They are muscular. Men shorter than the

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WOMAN scrapes well in an açuri palm, above, after top has been chopped off. Sap seeps upward, and while it collects a leaf covers the cavity. When well is full, below, a woman draws off the sap by using a long reed tube as a pipette.

[142]
[302]
[415]

[p. 41-B]

6:Kozak C-5 (ca. 1954) 1963
SP8 Bororo SP8

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renewed effort to call forth the spirit of the dead Bororo.

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The ritual dances of the Bororo depict in lively and vigorous fashion many aspects of their relations with the spirit world. All the dances take place in the village plaza, and most of them continue for hours at a time, requiring tremendous physical endurance. As one by one the dancers become exhausted, they drop out of line. Weary and covered with perspiration, each one squats unceremoniously on the shallow grave, while someone pours a pot of water over him. These shower baths have a twofold purpose: they refresh the dancers and also moisten the ground, thus hastening decomposition of the body.

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222●
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Before the dancers return to strenuous activity, they may sip palm "wine." This weakly fermented beverage is prepared from sap of the *acuri* palm, a tree that grows in profusion near the village. To collect the sap, a man climbs to the top of the tree and cuts off the uppermost fronds. Next, his wife ascends and, with a shell, scrapes the pith from the heart of the

[p.45-c]

palm, leaving a deep well in which the sap collects by upward seepage. She covers the opening with leaves, and by the next day the well is full. A number of women then suck the sap into reeds, which they use as pipettes. When a reed is full, they close the top quickly with a thumb and transfer the sap to large pots. It is then taken back to the village and left in the shade for a day to ferment.

FOR a change of pace from the ritual dances of the funerary ceremony, the Bororo engage in an unusual kind of relay race. Two teams of young men—each team representing one of the two moieties of the society—oppose each other. Men of the two groups cut stems of buriti palms, trim them to a uniform length, and tie them into two huge circular bundles resembling cart wheels. Each one is about three feet in diameter and may weigh more than one hundred pounds. With a "cart wheel" on his shoulder, a lead-off man from each team begins running toward the village. When he tires under his heavy burden, the bundle is taken over

[p. 45-D]

[text continues on p. 46-B]

7:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1907
SP8 Bororo SP8

578 enjoy the sport. The fighters tumble, kick, and bite, and scratch with the poisonous spur or spine from the tail of a fish similar to the skate secured to their little fingers. Their endurance is marvelous and the fight may continue many hours, sometimes nearly all day, both parties constantly uttering their yells. The defeated party leaves the village, and the woman becomes the victor's prize.

241 412 The Bororó, like most other savage men, look to nature to furnish them with nearly all their food. About the only thing they cultivate is a little yellow corn, and even this with great difficulty, for they have no steel instruments. They are communistic, and therefore little inclined to attempt anything extensive in the way of agriculture or to provide a stock of food, for if one family should do this, it would only be to divide the harvest with the rest of the community and leave themselves with nothing for the morrow. There is thus no incentive for labor except when hunger drives them in 433 search of food. The Bororó is therefore acquainted with about everything edible in his environment, and he knows when and 226 where and how to obtain it. The river is by far his most important source of supply, and when fish are abundant in December, January, 222 and February he grows fat. The rest of the year he is obliged to look largely to the woods for food, though he is a more expert fisherman than hunter, and individual families wander abroad through bush and forest along the rivers. As to fruit and vegetables, the palm is his never failing friend. It will always provide him with something when naught else can be found. At every season of the year he may obtain the white cheese-like heart of a diminutive palm. The fibrous trunk of two or three other varieties, pounded and wrung out, gives a starchy, liquid-like milk which, when boiled in a clay pot and mixed with the yellow fruit of the burity, makes good soup; or he may dry the starch and make it into bread. Another palm, called burity by the Brazilians, yields a yellow fruit bigger than a very large plum, which he eats with a relish, though we considered it very insipid. Still another species furnishes an unfailing supply of nuts about the size of a goose egg. This he throws into the fire for a few minutes, then removes the thin outer shell, and scrapes off and eats a thin insipid substance very much like the inner bark of the slippery elm. He then splits open the remainder of the thick shell and obtains a white woody kernel, which he eats raw or pounds in a wooden mortar and makes into a loaf to be wrapped in a large leaf and baked into bread in the [283] ashes. This is considered quite a delicacy. The palm also furnishes material for his bows and for the shafts of his arrows. The

7:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1907
SP8 Bororo SP8

long tongue-like leaf furnishes a silk or band of strands called bokigo, which he rolls into a single strand as he sits cross-legged on the ground, and by twisting this strand with others he obtains cording with which to make his fishing nets, harpoon lines, etc. From the ground he digs two or three varieties of the potato family, which he boils. Corn is eaten as roasting ears or cut from the ears and boiled. They use no salt. The large ant bear is considered the most valuable of all creatures. Nearly every part of its body is utilized. When discovered it is driven to the village for slaughter in order to secure its blood. After this comes the tapir, which is also greatly esteemed. When food is plenty they eat nearly all the time when awake, and even rise several times in the night to take a little food. While we were in the baehytu at the Kogy ao Paro village we saw 33 men devour upwards of 25 gallons of boiled shelled corn within an hour and a half, and they had been nibbling roast ears all the morning. The two men who had accompanied us from the Ja-Dare-Mano Paro were induced to eat from every pot as they were brought in one at a time. They seem never to get full, and will eat as long as there is anything to be had. While at work making bows and arrows and ornaments, they are nibbling food, if they can obtain it. They eat the corn mush squatting and standing around the pot, using large oyster-like shells or broad leaves as spoons.

222 [283] 224 264

Their language seems quite free from clicks and from deep gutturals. The names given to animals are often in imitation of the sound produced by the animal. Ki, for instance, means tapir, and is a close imitation of the note of this animal; pobu means river or water; pobu camahina is great river; meri rutu, sunset; adugo, spotted tiger or ounce; and aigo, brown ounce. Báekimo is the negative; Boe by báekimo means "Indian die not"—"I will not die."

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They are wonderful whistlers and seem able thus to communicate whatever they otherwise would by speech.

198

All the fine and ornamental work is done by the men. A great deal of time and labor is spent in making seemingly unimportant articles, and the time consumed in shaping and burnishing an arrow is astonishing, generally the larger part of two days. The shell ornament worn around the neck is made by the reciprocating motion of the point of a sharp instrument of flint or of iron or steel, if they can obtain it, fastened near the center of a roughly shaped shell. A fire is kindled in the same way by boring a wooden rod into another bit of wood. When holes have been made in bits of roughly

462 [321] [322]

7:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1907
SP8 Bororo SP8

When holes have been made in bits of roughly
321 shaped shells they are strung tightly together on a cord or rod, and
322a bit of grinding stone is rubbed up and down their edges till they are of equal size. A wide belt is made by placing two bamboo rods in the ground two feet or more apart and winding around them the thread that is to serve as warp, placing each thread close beside the preceding one. The woof is then worked with the fingers and a wooden blade.

222 Wild cotton is pulled out and rolled into thread by hand just as the
283 fiber of the palm is made into cord.

411 Bows and arrows are used in war, but they prefer to fight at close quarters with a club of heavy wood, shaped nearly like a baseball bat, about 3½ feet long. A smaller club is also used as club or sword.

852 The ceremony of naming baby boys is very interesting. Early in the morning the family and friends, with the little one coated and ornamented with feathers of crimson and white, accompanied by a priest, take up a position on the highest ground near the village. At [304] sunrise, the priest pierces the lower lip of the embryo warrior with a long, sharp, bone-pointed instrument made for the occasion and decorated with many-colored feathers. At the same time he pronounces "Piadudu" or the name of some bird, animal, or object whose name the child is to bear. "Piadudu," softly repeat the family and friends, and thus "Piadudu," humming-bird, a favorite name, be-
551 comes the name of the child. They are very jealous of their names and will not make them known to any one not belonging to their tribe, always when asked responding "parduko"—I do not know.

562 A woman is totally disfranchised and can scarcely consider herself a citizen. She is merely an adjunct to the man.

515 These savages, although so filthy in their habits, are sometimes quite sensitive to noxious odors, and we were sometimes much amused to see them rush about in disgust to escape some disagreeable odor.

501 They make no canoes, but are satisfied with small rafts sufficient to float their cocoanuts or mano down the river.

142 The Bororó are the tallest of any South American Indians I have seen. I do not remember one man under five feet seven inches, and they are sometimes six feet three or four inches tall. They are full faced, the nose well shaped and not large nor particularly flat, nor are the cheek bones especially prominent. Many of the children and some of the young men are quite handsome.

161 The tribe is supposed to number between five and ten thousand
114 souls. We visited eight villages and settlements.

her specie. While the man, on the contrary, fierce and war-like in his nature, has busied himself from time immemorial making deadly weapons, fighting and slaughtering. The woman was the first farmer, the first miller, the first potter and basket maker, the first dressmaker and tailor, the first beast of burden, and some men think the first ecclesiastic; while the man was the first murderer. 462

Every morning, small parties of Bororó females, unarmed, may be seen going forth in various directions with huge baskets on their backs, suspended by bark straps from their foreheads, to explore jungle and forest in search of fruits and vegetables, many of them reaching out eight or ten miles from home, and returning late in the day carrying one hundred fifty or more pounds of goose-egg cocoanuts, hearts of dwarf palms, wild potatoes, and other food material, and perhaps also, transporting a child three or four years old which sits in the loop of a bark strap that passes over the mother's shoulders. If the man should return, empty handed, from a hunting or fishing expedition, he nevertheless requires, Esau-like, that at least a "mess of pottage" should await him. 222 [482] [854]

The Bororó female is betrothed, or, more correctly, is contracted for in infancy, and married when she reaches the age of ten or twelve years. If she is not married, or at least spoken for, ere she reaches the age of twelve or fourteen years, she will be seized, unawares, some day, dragged to the great hut, and forced to become a victim to the lusts of all the men of the village. It is a terrible ordeal for the poor, helpless creature, and she is nearly, if not altogether done to death at times. Her parents, though they may grieve for her, do not, or dare not, attempt to rescue her. Her assailants will not enter the parental hut to take her. They have, evidently, some idea of the sanctity, or the inviolability of the private residence. But they catch her by stealth when she is outside the family hut. Because of this hideous custom, parents earnestly desire that their daughters should at least be contracted for when still very young. I was told that they are often contracted for when but a few days, or a few months old. 582 584 839 [584]

8:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1909
SP8 Bororo SP8

584 The betrothal is consummated by the bridegroom-to-be, depositing at the entrance to the hut of the parents of the baby girl whom he desires shall one day become his wife, some much-prized game that he has had the "good luck" to capture. The parents of course learn, either directly or indirectly, what his wishes are in making them this valuable present; and if they do not object to the nuptials, their little daughter is reserved
585 for him. Again, some day, after the child has reached the age of ten or twelve years, the groom-to-be deposits at the entrance to her hut a highly prized fish or animal which he has had the good fortune to capture, then retires to his own hut. The father of the little maid now takes her by the wrist—always the wrist—conducts her to the entrance of the hut of her betrothed husband and delivers her to him, and she becomes his lawful, wedded wife without further ceremony.
582 He may be forty or fifty years of age, and have already a wife
584 and married children, though, nevertheless, allowed to have
585 two wives because he has slain the jaguar, or performed some other feat of valor, or because he is a captain, having passed middle life.

616 The inhabitants of every Bororó village are divided into two groups, called the *Sheràidi*, and the *Ta Nagarêda*, and a man is not permitted to take a wife from his own division, so must go to the other party for one. It is said that the Bororó tribe as it now exists is composed of two tribes that joined fortunes long ago, and that this is the origin of the *Sheràidi* and *Ta Nagarêda* divisions. But I doubt if this is true, for a similar social arrangement exists among other tribes. The Bororó have a tradition that centuries ago the *Sheràidi* possessed everything that the *braidi*—white man—now possesses, such as axes, hoes, knives, but that a calamity befell them because they had these things, so they forsook them. Perhaps the tribe was once in touch with the Inca civilization of the Andean slope.

222 After marriage, the Bororó child-wife may be seen with a
595 small basket upon her back, suspended as usual by a bark strap from the forehead, accompanying her old husband's senior

8:Cook M-3 (1900-1901) 1909
SP8 Bororo SP8

wife, as they roam the forest day after day in quest of fruits and vegetables, or industriously assisting in the preparation of the food at the family hut. Or, if her *old man* should be fond of her, she may be seen accompanying him at times and amusing herself in a childish way.

The Bororó word for man, or men, that is, Bororó men, is *mêdo*, from *meri*, the sun, signifying, son of the sun; while the word for woman or women, is *arêda*, from *ari*, the moon, signifying, daughter of the moon. This indicates the inferiority of the woman to the man in their thoughts. The man is the great light, while the woman is only a weak, inferior reflection of her husband. Nevertheless, the Bororó admire and worship the moon, and on a bright moonlight night a large group of them may be seen sitting quietly outside the great hut mutely adoring the queen of night.

The *arêda* does not appear to have any independent rights of citizenship in the tribe, existing solely in her husband and for his benefit and pleasure. Hence, "woman's suffrage" is not even dreamed of in these primitive societies. The *arêda* is kept in complete subjection to her man through fear of the *bopi*, and of the public brothel in the great hut; for if she displeases him, he has but to say the word and she will be dragged to the brothel and assaulted by all the *mêdo* of the village. Widows, or women whose husbands have abandoned them, become prostitutes, for a time, at least, or until remarried.

The customs of this tribe forbid that their children should be born within the village. Therefore, when the prospective mother begins to feel the pains of maturity, she betakes herself to a secluded spot in the jungle, where she remains until she brings forth. Then she returns home, or is led back by female friends who go in search of her. Like a beast, the primitive woman needs no attendant at this supreme moment of her existence, and is about her daily occupations again without the loss of an hour. It is not uncommon to see Bororó children, especially female children, nursing until they are six or seven years of age; so large, indeed, that they can stand upon the ground and nurse while the mother remains standing. Smaller

/489 cont./

732 Sometimes Dyapokuri gave a performance. The men were far from regarding the feeble-minded one, who could only babble, as a superior creature. He liked to portray the quarreling of the women by launching into the most enraged gestures and vigorously demonstrated the mutual scratching and hair-pulling. He flew into frightful agitation himself, however, when a soldier teased him on account of his setting out to pursue the Kayapó (page 568) and, a stick over his shoulder, hitched along with huge, lunging strides: the poor devil foamed at the mouth with indignation, threw his burning chunk of wood at the mocker, and, since he did not know what else to do, snatched up a few wood chips from the ground and, with a teeth-baring grimace and unintelligible sounds of rage, depicted -- the mustache of the soldier. After a while he calmed down again and, for the funeral ceremony, practiced rattling with two rattle gourds and the rhythmic aróe grunts.

123 The hours in the ranchão were instructive and agreeable. There was only one thing that was intolerable, the incessant begging for tobacco. My pipe traveled from one man to another. The men dictated pages of Bororó to me, each one having to present in sentences whatever was going on at the moment, listened to me repeat it, and then laughed, just as gratified [157] as the Bakaïrí. The more intimate we became, the more striking was the agreement in temperament and character with the Kulisehu Indians. On a post in the men's house, after we had taken the anthropological measurements, /490/ my height was also indicated. A piece of charcoal was crushed with the teeth, pulverized with saliva in the hand, and above my head a black ring was painted around the post.

433 Food: "consecration." According to Clemente's report, in spite of all the hunting, the plant food obtained by the women is of the greatest importance, because it comes in more regularly 222 and abundantly. The women look for roots with a pointed stick, climb up the palm trees with great agility, among which preference is given to the oaussú and akurí, gather the nuts, cut the "palm cabbage" in the crown, look for jatobá and pikí fruits, 292 and so forth. The palm nuts are roasted or pounded in a mortar 574 and mixed with water to make a thickish drink, the refreshing

301 [237] The principal ornaments used by men consisted of beautifully made feather ear pendants (*iwitúta*) about 6 inches long, jaguar-teeth necklaces (*okopó*), necklaces made from human hair (*pasoó*), and cotton arm bands worn above the biceps. A short bamboo lip plug was worn in the lower lip. A crude comb, *patúka*, was made by binding together with human hair four siriva wood spikes about 5 534 inches in length. During dances the men fastened rattles made from tapir and peccary hoofs to their ankles. Women wore feather ear pendants and "store"-bead necklaces. Some of these ornaments are still worn by the old men.

ECONOMICS

AGRICULTURE

241 The traditional food crops of the Umotina included such plants as bitter manioc (*otsíyo*), sweet manioc (*otsíyo biborúso*), maize (*omatáka*), black and red beans (*dumatáka*), sweetpotatoes (*balarkúpo*), and cará (*tapatáku*). In addition, they cultivated gourds (*podri*), cotton (*akyámani*), [276] and urucú (*nodókahíriku*). Tobacco was not grown, as the Umotina did not smoke in the past. ● 222 The food supply was further augmented by the collection of a wide variety of roots, nuts, and fruits, including the piqui (*ketír*), mangaba (*katorákwa*), and the "marmelo" (quince, *kashorákwa*). 237 Honey (*peíru*), was considered a delicacy and collected particularly before ceremonies.

241 Fields were cleared in the forest, but instead of felling the large trees, the branches were trimmed off in order to let in the sunlight. The undergrowth was beaten down with a wooden sword club (*ánthe*) made from the wood of the siriva palm. In September the dry cut-over was burnt, and with the use of only a digging stick (*tápu*), the planting began. Maize was planted first; three or four seeds were put into a hole about 6 inches deep in order to protect them from birds. Manioc was planted by putting two pieces of stalk into a hole prepared with a digging stick. The field was weeded about a month later, after which the